ARCHITECTURAL WORKS IN EDINBURGH.

We take the following from the *Companion to the Almanac* for next year. We shall refer hereafter to its contents generally, which are of a very interesting kind:*—

"To the slight notice, in our volume for 1846, respecting the Commercial Bank, and one or two other structures then in progress at Edinburgh, we can now add some further particulars, and have to correct an error into which we were led as to the façade of the Bank. Instead of the portico being a hexastyle *in antis*, from which description it would naturally be inferred that it was closed at its ends and recessed within the building, it is a simple hexastyle, monoprostyle (*i.e.* projects one intercolumn before the general line of the front, which is extended by an intercolumn between coupled antæ on either side of the portico); therefore, although the entire front consists of seven intercolumns, the portico itself, and the part within it, have only *five*. If that feature be considered by itself alone—as is unfortunately too generally the custom in all cases of the kind—it may be pronounced both classical and ornate, for not only are the columns fluted, but the pediment filled with figures in very high relief, representing Peace, attended by Abundance, Navigation, Commerce, and other allegorical personages. This piece of sculpture is the work of Mr. A. H. Ritchie, a native artist, and it is only to be regretted, that owing to the untowardness of the aspect (north) both that and the portico lose much of their effect. Even were the aspect ever so favourable, the portico would still show itself too much as a mere architectural appendage of studiedly templelike character attached to a structure decidedly *anti-antique*, its physiognomy being strongly marked by fenestration and other traits of modernism and Italianism. Not only are there two tiers of windows (which are continued within the portico), but the upper ones have arched heads, and balustrades below. Instead, too, of having a Greek podium or parapet, the building itself is crowned by a balustrade. Thus two distinct and hardly reconcileable systems are brought into contact, and even collision, with each other; therefore, either the portico should have been accommodated to the building, or the building to the portico; for at present the pure classicality affected for the latter is contradicted by all the rest. The ascent to the portico, however, and the extension of the lower part of the composition by balustrades carried from the pedestals that flank the flight of steps, to two insulated doorways or portals with open ironwork gates, produce considerable effect of a rather unusually picturesque kind. The interior is more satisfactory; one of its principal parts is a handsome inner hall, carried up the entire height of the building, and surrounded by an Ionic colonnade below, and a Corinthian one above. It is lighted entirely from above by a lantern, and has a staircase on two of its sides. The principal banking office, to which this hall conducts, is, for a room of business, the most highly decorated apartment of the kind in the kingdom: it is a spacious apartment, square in plan, with a Corinthian colonnade of three intercolumns on each side, and is surmounted by a dome whose section is of elliptical form, and richly ribbed and panelled, through which the light is admitted from ornamentally glazed compartments. The architectural effect of this saloon, as it may fairly be called, is enhanced very considerably by the abundant employment of decorative painting, gilding, and marbling, executed, we believe, by Mr. Hay, of Edinburgh, who embellished the great room of the Society of Arts in the Adelphi.

Donaldson Hospital has, we are glad to say, proved an equally worthy and important feature in the architecture of Edinburgh, being a fine and imposing mass of building, in what we could before only vaguely characterize as the Elizabethan style, but can now describe as partaking largely of that particular mode of it exhibited in Burleigh House, and in which ogive-domed turrets, and towers, and chimneys contribute so greatly to picturesqueness of outline. The edifice is completely insulated and apart from other buildings; and at each of its four angles is a square pavilion, with a projecting three-storied bay on each of its two outer sides, and four domed turrets of the kind just mentioned rising up from it. The centre of the south or principal front is marked by a larger and loftier pavilion of similar composition, but with octagonal turrets and domes more ornamented than the others. The general mass of building or parts between the pavilions, has only two series of large square-headed mullioned windows, and a parapet broken into a series of small gables with chimney shafts rising out of them.

The new Debtors' Jail, of which, we understand, Mr. Rhind is the architect, is in what may be called the castellated Norman style, and presents in its general composition an upright group of variously-shaped towers, rising above the external wall of enclosure, and so disposed as to produce much picturesque effect of outline from different points of view. We may also mention the chapel of St. Columba, lately erected by Mr. Henderson, in the vicinity of the castle, as being, though a small and unobtrusive structure, a far better specimen of Gothic than other attempts in that style at Edinburgh, most of which are exceedingly unsatisfactory, the Scott monument being not the least so. Some time ago it was rumoured that a Roman Catholic church and college were to be erected in the Lothian-road, after designs by Mr. Pugin, but, if it really existed, such intention seems to be now dropped. Edinburgh is now about to be greatly benefited, and in some degree architecturally improved also—at least to acquire several new architectural features—by the erection of several terminuses and other railway buildings, some of which are now in progress. Little more than a year ago the railroad from Glasgow to Edinburgh was the only line of importance which communicated with the latter city; and its terminus, at the western outskirts of the New Town, presents little more to the eye than what is suggested by utility alone. Since then, however, the opening of the North British line to Berwick, and the completion of the railroad between Berwick and Newcastle, in continuation of the eastern route from London, have given importance to Edinburgh as a focus of communication, and have led to schemes of considerable magnitude, if not of extraordinarily high architectural pretension. The Glasgow line having been lately extended eastward, to meet the North British, a joint-terminus, unrivalled for convenience of situation, has been formed for those lines, and also for the short railroad to Leith and Granton, in the hollow between the Old and New Towns, formerly called the North Loch; the buildings for which extend from the North Bridge on the east, towards the mound on the west. Lying in a low situation, as this joint-terminus does, and where any spreading and lofty pile of building would interrupt the picturesque view between the Old and New Towns, its architectural masses are very judiciously kept down, nor has any more decoration been bestowed upon them than serves to produce a requisite degree of finish. The great rival to the eastern line of communication is the Caledonian Railway, which approaches Edinburgh on the west, from Carlisle, having a line also diverging at Lanark to Glasgow, and completing the communication with London by means of the Lancaster and Carlisle, and the North-Western railways. Of the Caledonian line, however, a length of forty miles north of Carlisle is all that has been yet opened, though the remainder is in such forwardness that the entire line to Edinburgh is expected to be finished by the end of the present year (1847). Its terminus will be in the Lothian-road, at a point due west from the castle; a locality of no architectural interest at present, but which may be expected to acquire much from the extensive works and improvements now commenced. The buildings will form a parallelogram of about 400 by 200 feet. The south or entrance front, which is on one of the longer sides, presents a façade with a handsome colonnade of the Ionic order, behind which rises an elevated central pile, containing the directors' rooms. The east or Lothian-road front exhibits an open screen of three large arcades, whose piers have coupled Ionic columns attached to them, which connects the two wings or extremities of the composition. The design is by Mr. Tite, the architect of the Royal Exchange, London, and architect for the stations and other buildings on the Caledonian, Lancaster and Carlisle, and Scottish Central lines of railway. The joint station of the two first-mentioned lines at Carlisle is, we may observe, now nearly completed; it is a Gothic pile of considerable pretension, and fully equal in extent to that just above mentioned, and of which we hope to be able to give a detailed description next year. In the same style as the one at Carlisle, but of greater extent, will be the station now just begun at Perth for the Scottish Central and Midland Companies."

* "The British Almanac for 1847, and the Companion to the Almanac, or Year-Book of General Information." London. C. Knight.

VENTILATION OF ROOMS.

Sir,—We have heard of late a great deal about the health of towns, as well as the ventilation of buildings, but as yet little has been effected.

Now, as the better ventilation of every apartment in every dwelling-house, especially those appropriated as sleeping apartments, would be highly conducive to health and comfort, permit me to describe a simple means by which this may be effected, at little expense, in every apartment of our dwellings, and also in shops, schools, hospitals, factories, churches, and other public buildings, as well as in those buildings also appropriated to animals of various kinds, and equally applicable in old as in new buildings.

A farmer, on a small scale, who had made a cellar his dairy, found the milk and butter would not keep sweet, owing to some offensive smell in the cellar, of which, for a long time, he in vain endeavoured to find the cause. The farmer then turned his mind to making a vent, or escape, for this offensive air, to effect which he made a hole in the ceiling large enough to receive a funnel, the large end or mouth of which he turned downwards and well plastered to the ceiling, so that air could escape only through the funnel; to the other end he attached a long small tube, which he conveyed along a joist above the ceiling, and out through the main wall of the building. To the great joy of the farmer, the cellar or dairy was thus rendered perfectly free from smell, and the butter and milk would keep sweet. Curiosity, however, induced the farmer to mount a ladder, and apply his nose to the small tube outside the building, when he found issue from it an excessively offensive stench.

A neighbour of the farmer, to whom had been related the above case, on visiting the County Asylum soon after, perceived an offensive odour in one of the wards, for which the matron found a plausible excuse; but the gentleman desired to be conducted to the water-closet of the ward, as he was sure the offence originated there, and this proved to be the case; but the remedy was not so obvious, until the farmer's statement occurred to his mind; he then immediately sent for workmen, and applied the farmer's remedy in the water-closet, which was in this case also equally effective.

We know that where three or four servants sleep in the same chamber, whether in a farmhouse or otherwise, that chamber is unfit to be entered the following morning—the atmosphere of it is so offensive, whether there be a chimney-place in it or not. Now, if an inverted funnel, say six inches diameter, were introduced through the ceiling, with a long small tube, say one inch diameter, and conducted along the joist above and through an outer wall, the foul air would escape, the chamber be freed from offensive smell, and consequently be more wholesome for the inmates. The same will apply to shops, school-rooms, work-shops, work-rooms, &c.

To drive a hole through the ceiling to the open space above would not so well answer the purpose, because the cold air would often rush down, and then the aperture would be certainly stopped up; or there might be two currents—one of warm air upwards, the other of cold air downwards—all of which the inverted funnel and tube would prevent.

To conduct the tube horizontally, and out at a side wall, will be found more effective than to carry it up perpendicularly through the roof, which, besides, cannot be done except in an upper chamber; and there can scarcely be a doubt that the atmosphere of all our rooms—eating-rooms, sleeping-rooms, and sitting-rooms, as well in cottages and farmhouses as in the dwellings of the middle and upper classes—would be improved by such

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